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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 03 ANKARA 004019

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR INR/R/MR, EUR/SE, EUR/PD, NEA/PD, DRL
JCS PASS J-5/CDR S. WRIGHT

E.O. 12958: N/A
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SUBJECT: ANKARA MEDIA REACTION REPORT
MONDAY, JUNE 23, 2003

THIS REPORT WILL PRESENT A TURKISH PRESS SUMMARY UNDER THREE THEMES:

HEADLINES
BRIEFING
EDITORIAL OPINION

HEADLINES

MASS APPEAL
Warm chat between Gul, Powell, Bremer - Hurriyet
Iranians urge mullahs to leave - Vatan
John Bolton: U.S. retains right to strike Iran - Aksam 6/21
U.S. seeks looted uranium in Iraq - Turkiye
Iraqi Kurds to unite their administrations - Milliyet 6/14
Iraq to exchange oil for diesel with Turkey - Sabah 6/22
Bush vows to continue Cyprus effort - Sabah

OPINION MAKERS
Hundreds of students missing in Iran - Radikal
Washington locked on Iran target - Cumhuriyet
Ankara prefers 'evolution' in Iran - Cumhuriyet 6/21
Iraqis not happy with U.S. troops - Radikal 6/21
Bush determined to find Iraqi WMD - Zaman 6/22
Sabotage on pipeline delays Iraqi oil flow to Turkey - Yeni Safak
Powell: Hamas the enemy of peace - Zaman 6/21
Gul: Turkey a source of inspiration for Middle East - Zaman
Erdogan thanks Greece for EU support - Radikal
Washington urges Ankara to back Annan plan - Cumhuriyet
Saudi intellectuals demand reform - Zamn 6/22

BRIEFING

Gul meets Powell at WEF: Foreign Minister Gul had a brief meeting with Secretary of State Powell and Paul Bremer, the U.S. overseer in Iraq. Gul discussed with his American counterparts ways to boost bilateral relations, as well as recent developments in Iraq and the Middle East. In his speech to the World Economic Forum (WEF) summit, Gul said that Turkey's democracy, respect for civil rights, and transparency could inspire change in the Middle East.

EU summit at Thessaloniki: The EU praised Ankara for enacting the 6th EU reform package, and stressed at meetings in Thessaloniki, Greece that accession negotiations with Turkey would begin in late 2004. Turkey has been invited to an EU conference in October as an observer. Turkish leaders Erdogan and Gul had dinner with the German, French, Italian and Greek leaders, which was seen as an indication of Greek support for Turkey. The final communique of the summit urged Turkey to continue the reform process and to finalize all legal changes before the end of 2003.

Americans meet KADEK: A delegation of U.S. officials held a meeting with KADEK officials on June 12 in the region controlled by the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK), Saturday's "Cumhuriyet" reported under a front page headline that read 'Bush plays the KADEK card.' The American delegation, headed by a colonel from Kirkuk, urged KADEK to disarm, and promised them security guarantees. Military service to be reduced: The TGS announced on Sunday that compulsory military service would be reduced from 18 to 15 months, and tours for reserve officers will become 12 instead of 16 months. The decision will reduce the number of soldiers in the Turkish military from 546,000 to approximately 450,000. Papers expect the move to please EU countries, which had been urging Turkey to cut defense spending.

"New illusions"

Ali Aslan observed in Islamist-intellectual Zaman (6/23):
"From the public affairs perspective, the characterization of U/S Ziyal's visit to Washington for public opinion has the potential to create new illusions in Turkish-American relations. Both Ziyal and Grossman spoke strongly about 'two strategic partners and allies.' Yet the real picture was not as good. It seems that the two countries used the media to disseminate their arguments, and now have decided to make things up by using the media. . The fact of the matter is that Turkish-American relations are suffering from the lack of depth, which is the true measure of a strategic partnership. There are efforts to upgrade bilateral contacts, and Ziyal's visit is one of them. The visit did make a positive impact on Washington. . Another illusion is about the future of Iran. There is an overall picture given in the media that Turkey has assured the US that 'we are with you on Iran.' Both the Bush administration and certain lobbying groups managed to eliminate Ankara's concerns about possible US plans for Syria and Iran. However, this does not necessarily mean that Turkey is committing itself to support the US no matter what. On the other hand, Ankara and Washington have a common vision of the future of Iran as a democratic country free of nuclear weapons."

"Making up with the US"

Zafer Atay wrote in the economic-political Dunya (6/23):
"Turkey's new message on Iran was fine-tuned according to what Washington wants to hear. Yet it requires a clarification on Turkish policy to set the criteria for supporting US policy and action in Iran. . Iran, on the other hand, is in real trouble. The IAEA has issued some very strong claims, including that Iran is secretly producing nuclear weapons. Apart from the international troubles with the US and IAEA, Iran is also suffering from domestic disturbances which seem to be leading to a strong anti-regime effort. . Turkish FM Gul has been invited to the US in the midst of these developments. His visit should be very carefully prepared so that he does not find himself in trouble in Washington."

PEARSON